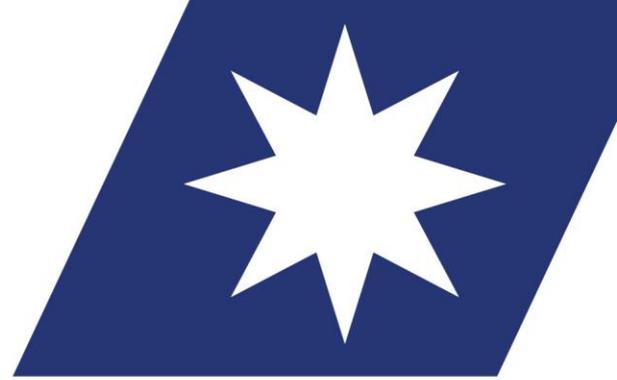


NICK DAMETTO

Member for Hinchinbrook



MEDIA RELEASE

30/7/19

Bio-energy plant gets Federal attention

HINCHINBROOK MP Nick Dametto has taken the case for Ingham's proposed North Queensland Bio-Energy (NQBE) plant straight to the halls of power in Canberra following a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack today.

Mr Dametto delivered an Investment Information Memorandum from NQBE Corporation Limited to Mr McCormack's office, which outlines the immense benefits of the \$640 million project to North Queensland and how it would revolutionise sugar production in Hinchinbrook.

"This project is more than a sugar mill. It creates an opportunity for farmers to capitalise on ethanol and electricity production as well as bio-plastics," Mr Dametto said.

"It would be a cooperative style investment and the group is seeking either an underwritten price for the power generated by this plant or a State and Federal Government commitment to invest, similar to what the Mossman Sugar Mill has received."

According to NQBE, the project would deliver between 400 and 450 jobs during construction and 253 new jobs once operational.

Mr Dametto said then Federal Agricultural Minister David Littleproud had also made "a lot of noise" about Ingham's proposed bio-energy plant during a visit to the town in April.

"The Minister was quoted as saying "he would work with North Queensland Bio Energy to find Government programs they can use". I take that as a commitment to get funding for this project," he said.

"If both the Federal and State governments are serious about creating a biofuel industry in the North, then it's time for them to put their money where their mouth is."

Last year, Mr Dametto met with State Energy Minister Anthony Lynham, representatives of the Department of State Development and NQBE Chairman Robert Carey to discuss what levers the State Government could pull to see the project come to fruition.

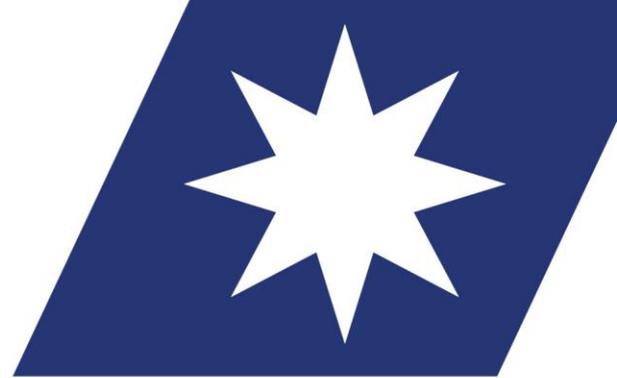
"At the moment the wholesale price of renewable electricity is disrupting the market but a project like this would add system strength and dispatchable power to the North Queensland grid," Mr Dametto said.

"A commitment by both the Federal and State Governments to underwrite the wholesale price of electricity that could be sold on the market by NQBE would help get this project off the ground."

Mr Dametto said Katter's Australian Party (KAP) had always backed NQBE "100 per cent" and committed to working with all stakeholders to realise the project.

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The previous Queensland State Budget allocated \$878,000 in 2018-19 out of a total \$1.1 million to assist with the “construction of a fully integrated bio-refinery near Ingham”, but Mr Dametto said it was imperative governments took the next step in order to “unleash the potential of this industry”.

Mr Dametto said NQBE would be a flagship project to showcase to the rest of Australia the future of ethanol, power generation and bioplastics production.

In the last Queensland parliament, Katter’s Australian Party (KAP) was able to achieve a mandate requiring four per cent of the total volume of regular unleaded petrol sales and ethanol-blended fuel sales by liable retailers to be ethanol-based fuel.

That mandate took effect on July 1, 2018, but now the KAP is calling for a 10 per cent mandate by 2025.

“With sugar cane the predominate crop in Hinchinbrook, I know just how beneficial a 10 per cent ethanol mandate would be to farmers and anyone looking to invest in ethanol production in our electorate,” Mr Dametto said.

“There is huge potential to grow that market, which is just waiting to be realised.”

—ENDS—

Photo captions

Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto and Deputy Prime Minister and Infrastructure Minister Michael McCormack during their meeting in Canberra today.

An Investment Information Memorandum from NQBE Corporation Limited which Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto delivered to Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack’s office.

Media Enquiries

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